



BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Kosovo Companies increase production quality

On October 7, the USAID Mission Director presented the owner of Kosovo's first potato processing company, PESTOVA, with official HACCP and GlobalGap international food quality and safety standards certifications. This achievement is a result of USAID technical assistance and a cost-sharing grant, as well as the company's own investments.



Patricia Rader, USAID/Kosovo Mission Director [left], presenting HACCP and Global Gap food quality and safety standards certificates.

For some time, the PESTOVA Company has been exporting potato chips to Macedonia and Albania. However it couldn't access other potential regional markets since the potatoes used for the company's VIPA brand chips were not grown according to GlobalGap standards. In addition, the processing facilities and staff required restructuring and training to meet modern food safety standards. As part of the adoption of HACCP standards, the company's owner made considerable investments to upgrade the processing facility and to contract for the services of a qualified certifying company. This achievement represents a major step forward for increasing the competitiveness of the Kosovo economy.

Through the Kosovo Cluster and Business Support (KCBS) Project, USAID has helped local food processors meet international food quality and safety standards. The KCBS Project, implemented by Chemonics International, concluded this autumn. The KCBS Project has provided a strong foundation for the new USAID Kosovo Private Enterprise Program.

Continuing support to Kosovo's businesses

Under a new business support program, USAID will continue to encourage Kosovo's private businesses to expand and enter new markets. The Kosovo Private Enterprise Program (KPEP), a four-year activity designed to stimulate Kosovo's economy by increasing the competitiveness of private businesses, started this September. The activity will help improve the competitiveness of businesses working in different sectors that have significant growth potential.

The new USAID program will promote improved quality and efficiency of locally produced goods and services. Additionally, it will identify market opportunities, emphasizing expansion in local and regional markets, and will encourage foreign companies to partner with or invest in Kosovo businesses. The new program will establish a framework for continuing the development of the private sector while gradually reducing external assistance.

The Kosovo Private Enterprise Program (KPEP) builds on the successes of a previous USAID project, the Kosovo Cluster and Business Support (KCBS) Project, which worked in three sectors or clusters: livestock, fruits and vegetables, and construction materials. The USAID KCBS Project helped many Kosovo businesses increase their sales and employment, generated investments in local enterprises and opened up new financing opportunities for Kosovo businesses.

The Kosovo Private Enterprise Program (KPEP) will be implemented by Booz Allen Hamilton

RULE OF LAW

Education for judicial and prosecutorial personnel

The launch of the Initial Legal Education Program (ILEP) marked an important step for the Kosovo Judicial Institute (KJI).

The KJI, as the institution principally responsible for training judicial and prosecutorial candidates and judicial support personnel, set out to create a core curriculum to better prepare and educate those working in the judicial sector. As this core curriculum, the ILEP is the result of much hard work and planning by the KJI and its partners.

The KJI will now provide a rigorous in-depth training of candidates for judicial and prosecutorial positions through the ILEP, which is a 15-month program including formal training as well as a mentoring component that will be based in courts and prosecution offices.

As its contribution to the ILEP, USAID's Kosovo Justice Support Program developed courses on several topics, including professional ethics, legal writing and reasoning, and administrative and constitutional law. Effective training in all of these areas is critical to the development of the judicial and prosecutorial system in Kosovo. USAID, through its Justice Support Program, has also supported the training of trainers and is providing on-going support to the cadre of KJI trainers. These trainers are fundamental to enhancing the further development of KJI's curriculum, preparing necessary and useful materials and improving teaching methods and instruction. In the future, USAID plans to design courses on case management and communications.

Ms. Patricia Rader, USAID/Kosovo Mission Director, commended the work of the institute at its launching event on September 18. USAID's Kosovo Justice Support Program is a four-year activity being implemented by the National Center for State Courts.

The Kosovo Chamber of Advocates starts drafting its first 5 year strategic plan

The Kosovo Chamber of Advocates (KCA) began the process of drafting a five (5) year institutional strategic plan. This is the first endeavor of this kind since the KCA's creation in 1973.

The initiative followed a Strategic Planning Workshop in Prizren October 10 through 12. The goal of the workshop was to conduct a self-assessment of the KCA's capacities and to identify priorities for the organization's development. The strategic plan, to be drafted over the next several months, will establish benchmarks for the organization's progress towards becoming a fully independent, effective and financially sustainable institution. In addition to materials developed at the retreat, the plan will incorporate the results of the recent Legal Profession Reform Index (LPRI) and the KCA Organizational Assessment. These tools were both funded by USAID and revealed a number of areas where the KCA could better focus its

resources to meet the needs of its members and the legal profession generally.

The workshop gathered the KCA's executive board and strategic planning team, and was facilitated by Daragh O'Shea and Kevin Hoy, both members of the Irish Law Society, and moderated by Dawn M. Shock and Laura Berger, representing the American Bar Association Rule of Law Initiative.

The Kosovo Chamber of Advocates is a partner of the USAID-funded Legal Professional Development Initiative being implemented by the American Bar Association Rule of Law Initiative.

SPECIAL INITIATIVES

AUK launches the School of Public Service

The American University in Kosovo is introducing a new School of Public Service which will offer a comprehensive Master of Science degree focusing on the management, economics, and policy development goals of Kosovo's public sector.

The School of Public Service is AUK's newest program and has been created to address both the current and future needs of Kosovo's public service workforce. Students will earn a Master of Science in Professional Studies, a multidisciplinary degree requiring 48 quarter credit hours of study. The program is being implemented in partnership with the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT).

The program includes courses such as Public Administration and Management, Public Budgeting, Principles of Administrative Law in Kosovo & European Union, The International System and Its Institutions, and others. USAID will provide scholarships to enable outstanding civil servants, excluding political appointees and elected officials, to attend the program. The first class of twenty students is expected to begin classes in January 2009.

The program is being designed and implemented by AUK and RIT. USAID scholarships for outstanding civil servants are being implemented through World Learning.

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